

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-30

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* ----- 037600

O R 150001Z DEC 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE

INFO USCINCEUR

CINCPAC

SECDEF

CNO

JCS

S E C R E T STATE 245195

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, IO, IR

SUBJECT: INDIAN OCEAN TASK GROUP

REF: TEHRAN 8624

1. WE HAVE DISCUSSED LEGAL PROBLEM WITH AMERICAN CONSORTIUM MEMBERS. THEY HAVE NO INFORMATION TO SUGGEST PROTEST IS TO BE MADE THAT WOULD BE UNNECESSARILY EMBARRASSING BUT ASSUME CONSORTIUM WILL SEND STANDARD LETTER REFUSING NIOC REQUEST FOR PRODUCT NOT CLEARLY INTENDED FOR DOMESTIC USE. THEY RECOMMEND THAT FUTURE SUPPLIES BE REQUISITIONED DIRECT FROM AMERICAN MEMBER COMPANIES. THIS IS NOW UNDER CONSIDERATION HERE.

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2. FOLLOWING BACKGROUND MAY BE USEFUL TO YOU:

A) SUPPLY OPERATION FIRST BECAME KNOWN O CONSORTIUM WHEN NIOC LEVIED REQUIREMENT FOR PRODUCT FOR "DOMESTIC USE".

CONSORTIUM WAS AWARE OF NO RPT NO IRANIAN NEED FOR JP-5 AND LEARNED PRODUCT WAS BEING LOADED IN TANKERS KNOWN TO BE UNDER USN CHARTER FOR REFUELING OPERATIONS. CONSORTIUM WITH SOME RELUCTANCE DID NOT PROTEST WHEN ASSURED THAT FUEL WAS TO SUPPORT JOINT IIN-USN EXERCISE. LATEST REQUEST FOR PRODUCT MET STRONG CONSORTIUM RESISTANCE SINCE NIOC DID NOT SAY IT WAS FOR JOINT EXERCISE BUT FOR SALE USN (IT IS

UNCLEAR WHETHER THIS REQUEST WAS FOR DEC. 11 TROJAN LIFT OR FOR FUTURE LIFT). CONSORTIUM IS EXPECTED REFUSE FUTURE REQUESTS FOR PRODUCT NOT INTENDED FOR ACTUAL DOMESTIC USE OR FOR JOINT MANEUVERS.

B) CONSORTIUM MEMBERS ARE EXTREMELY SUSPICIOUS OF ANY IRANIAN FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH LETTER OF CONTRACT, SINCE IT FEARS ANY LOOPHOLES WILL BE STEADILY WIDENED. FOR EXAMPLE, NIOC IS NOW PRESSING CONSORTIUM TO SUPPLY IT WITH PRODUCT FOR SALE TO JAPAN IN TRADE FOR PIPE CASING, WHICH WILL OBVIOUSLY MEAN INCREASE IN SUPPLY TO JAPAN AT EXPENSE OTHER CUSTOMERS.

3. IN PARA 2C REFTTEL EMBASSY POINTS OUT IT WOULD BE PREFERABLE IF DIRECT CONSORTIUM-USN SALE COULD BE ARRANGED. (SINCE CONSORTIUM NOT ITSELF SALES COMPANY, ANY SALES WOULD HAVE TO BE THROUGH ARRANGEMENT WITH AMERICAN MEMBERS) WOULD DIRECT SALES ARRANGEMENT FROM AMERICAN MEMBERS TO USN BE ACCEPTABLE TO NIOC OR WOULD NIOC FEEL THAT IT SHOULD RETAIN SOME MIDDLEMAN ROLE? APPRECIATE EARLY EMBASSY COMMENT.

4. CINCPAC DTG 102214Z DEC HAS DETAILS ON PLANNED JANUARY OIL LIFTS. DURATION OF TASK GROUP OPERATIONS IS STILL UNDER CONSIDERATION HERE. RUSH

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